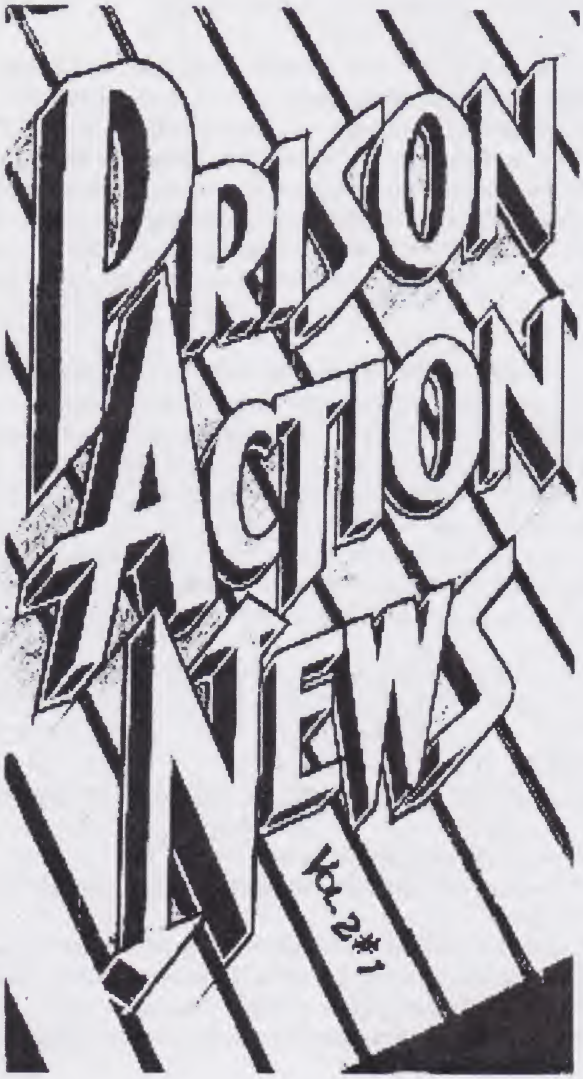

Vol. 2 #1 =

This issue of PAN is dedicated to the late Harold H. Thompson, anarchist prisoner and jailhouse lawyer who was serving a double life sentence in Henning, TN. Harold is remembered by many friends and comrades, to whom he was always faithful and caring. He lives on through his poetry and essays which can be found in English and Spanish. Harold was also a painter, escape artist, and all around bad ass guy. We will forever keep him alive in our hearts as we continue on in this struggle. We miss you Harold, Rest in peace and when you wish it-chaos.

Prison Action News is a newsletter collaboratively published by prisoner support groups worldwide for prisoners to report on their struggles and acts of resistance from behind bars. All submissions must be received by Dec 1st or June 1st and be in compliance with the following guidelines. Please note that we retain the right as editors to alter submissions for grammatical or content-related issues. Prison Action News is one part of the multi-faceted Prison Abolition movement. We feel as though the writing that goes into Prison Action News is equally vital but different than other forms of writing, such as poetry, political essays, etc. but is often less represented.

History:
The idea for Prison Action News came out of the 2007 Anarchist Black Cross gathering. We wanted to create a venue for prisoners to share updates of their activities with each other, similar to the updates we wrote in our network newsletter. Recognizing that there is far too much activity occurring in prisons to put in our quarterly newsletter, we decided to create a new newsletter specifically to report activity within prisons. As people on the outside, we can facilitate this dialog of prison resistance, and help our comrades on the inside hear from each other about the inspiring actions they are taking. We have recently opened up submissions to prisoners and prison groups worldwide. With your help this newsletter will be a success!

Please send submissions and/or questions to any of the following:

PAN c/o Boston ABC	PAN c/o Chicago ABC	PAN c/o ABC Para-legal
PO Box 230182	PO Box 1544	PO Box 7187
Boston, MA 02123	Chicago, IL 60690	Austin, TX 78712
BostonABC@riseup.net	ChicagoABC@riseup.net	twitchon@hotmail.com

Guidelines

1. An update must not exceed 500 words.
2. We will not accept submissions with racist, sexist, homophobic, or otherwise oppressive language.
3. An update may be a report on resistance activities of individual prisoners or prison groups (this can include, but is not limited to, radical book groups, hunger strike, general strike, letter writing campaigns, etc.)
4. PAN is accepting artwork for the covers of upcoming issues, so send us your designs!
5. A report should not be a political essay or a report on prison conditions, rather the response and resistance to these conditions
6. One submission per group, per prison, per newsletter
7. We will not report on gang activity.

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18-
CMAP

Colorado.....2/3
Illinois.....3/4/5
Nevada.....6/7
Ohio.....8/9
Pennsylvania.....10
Texas.....11-18
Utah.....18/19
International.....19-22

Colorado

Colorado State Penitentiary *April 17, 2008*

I have been battling the system for the past three years and now I'm looking to build my support group in the free world. Anyone who can assist with Internet work, copy work, typing work, distribution of resource lists and literature, legal news subscriptions or any other support please contact me at the address below.

I have put together a large list of resources for legal organizations, pen pals, zines, resource lists, books, newspapers, newsletters, and discount magazine subscription services.

Any prisoner wanting a copy of a list needs to have someone from the free world write and request that list. Keep in mind the mailroom reads my mail so don't try to three-way a letter to me or I won't get the request. I have way too much going on to include in this letter but I will give a brief rundown.

I have been trying to get a lot of thing changed around this place and have been put on grievance restriction, request restriction and now am being denied legal supplies. I have been sending letters out to the executive director, the media, and other groups and organizations. I had an investigator from CDOC pull me into his office and tell me that the media had contacted them and wanted to interview me and it would be in my best interest if I didn't talk to them. I have sent them numerous letters since then and have not received any responses back. I'm sure

 mailroom staff is not letting the letters go out.

Anyone wishing to assist me, please contact me, but I'm not allowed to receive letters from other inmates. I am working on getting that changed because other prisoners in this state cannot receive letters from other prisoners.

Ernest Brewer
93706
CSP A6-15
PO Box 777
Canan City, CO 81215

Illinois

Stateville Correctional Center *December 2008*

Since being locked up for a juvenile multiple homicide and given a Natural Life sentence I have been trying to give back to the community I helped tear down. I was a hardcore gang-banger in the mean streets of Chicago. Since that time I have become conscious and focused on the plan for my life, educating myself and doing whatever I can to better myself. The administration at Stateville Corrections and the IDOC do not want this for me, or any of the brothers behind walls. For the past years I have petitioned for programs, and tried to start an organization that would focus prisoners on healing some of the wounds they (we) have caused. I have constantly been unanswered and denied, even with prominent figures backing. Here you find no schooling, including GED or higher education, nothing to prepare prisoners for the outside, and constant abuse of the rules, which will only send us over the edge. My resistance of filing grievances, petitioning, and non-violence, is falling of deaf ears. So I will finish self-publishing a book called *Distractions*, which is to be passed out to the community, so everyone will become aware of what is really going on. I will continue to use what little outside resources I have to better our condition as a whole.

For those who are reading this and who believe in action, support my efforts by writing or calling Stateville Correctional Center, Box 112, Joliet, IL 60434. Question the reasons why my petitions and voice is not

being taken under consideration. Some of the other prisoners' families, 4
along with mine, are active in this movement. All help is welcomed!
Thank you for your support on any level!
On behalf of,

Rev. Anthony Spaulding
(K-54932)
Stateville Correctional Center
P.O. Box 112
Joliet, IL 60434

Menard Correctional Center *September 2008*

I would like to report that I have been defending myself in court as a Pro Se Defendant, Petitioner and Plaintiff, in my legal affairs listed as follows: Pro se Post-Conviction petition for a Writ of State Habeas Corpus currently pending, and a Pro se Conviction Petition for Executive Clemency currently pending. On the Civil side, Twitch over at ABC Paralegal Services has assisted with the filing of four lawsuits in the District Court under 42 U.S.C. 1983 filed at the same time, yet the four lawsuits are inter-connected. Plus, I am going to file in the Small Claims Court, a lawsuit about my typewriter getting broken by a staff member here at Menard Correctional Center on that very same day. So I am glad to report that I am, and have been fighting back since the day of my false arrest and imprisonment.

Because of the Prison Reform Litigation Act (PRLA), I am in serious financial debt, so any and all donations in the form of $50.00 money orders or less,can be made out to me Vernon Tolbert, #B56814, PO Box 711, Menard, IL 62259.

I also would like to report that I've sent a letter of support to Mr. Steven Long – Chairman, Division of Board of Probation & Parole, on behalf of Brother and Comrade Jerome White-Bey, MDOC#37479, of Jefferson City, Missouri, and I did likewise for any and all of my fellow Comrades who have directly and indirectly solicited support in this regard.

Vernon Tolbert #B56814
PO Box 711

Below is an open letter to IL Governor Rod Blagojevich that Vernon has been distributing:

An Open Letter to Governor Rod R. Blagojevich has been sent by a Coalition for Answers Regarding Executive Clemency, the letter urges the Governor to "adopt a policy that petitions [for Executive Clemency] will be reviewed and acted upon by your office within 3 months after the recommendations of the (PRB) have been delivered to you." The letter notes that the Governor's office reported on February 19, 2008, that there are 1,571 such petitions on his desk with recommendations from the PRB (Prisoner Review Board), waiting for his decision. The coalition is asking for an urgent meeting with Governor Blagojevich to discuss this matter may be expedited. "These petitions concern current prisoners, ex-prisoners on parole or mandatory supervised release, and ex-prisoners who have completed their parole or MSR" the letter notes.
"In all cases their ability to support themselves and their families and re-integrate into their communities is affected by this delay. In addition, many prisoners do not know that status of their petition; letters are delayed , are lost, or go to attorneys who are not always prompt about conveying this information to their clients. Since a new petition will not be considered by the (PRB) for at least one year following the denial of a previous petition, this leaves these prisoners and their families in a state of limbo and despair. This is especially true when these petitions are based on strong cases of Wrongful Conviction/Actual Innocence and a breakdown in the criminal justice system."

Prisoners, ex-prisoners, family members, religious, community, youth and trade union leaders, are all urged to add their names to the more than 200 people who had signed the letter as of April 1, 2008. People wishing to sign should send a note by mail or e-mail to the office of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression – Chicago, 1325 S. Wabash, Suite 105, Chicago, Illinois 60605, e-mail:info@naarpr.org

The Coalition was initiated by the (NAARPR) and the Men & Women in Prison Ministries, and was signed initially by a dozen people, including seven men and women who have been exonerated and released from prison but cannot find employment or social benefits because their

petitions for clemency are being ignored. Many petitions have been on the Governor's desk for many years.

Nevada

Ely State Prison *Dec 8, 2008*

I am in a maximum security lock up in Ely, Nevada. The event I want to write you about was a group event, but I would like to mostly write about my personal action and not others' involvement.

On March 15th, 2007, in the maximum lock up unit we (inmates) were notified that we would have to now go by a new rule which was implemented due to just a couple of inmates actions. The new rule was that we would have to put on our orange jumpsuits before correctional officers would open our food slots to serve us our meals, but that we would have to take our jumpsuits off again before being placed in handcuffs. This rule was implemented due to a few inmates masturbating in front of female guards when they would look into cells. Which most of us do not do or agree with being done, and I personally would not ever do. The point of what I'm saying is they were trying to punish us and have us acting like their puppets just for a few inmates' actions.

On March 15th, 2007, I began to refuse my food trays. But, what I would do is refuse to put on m jumpsuit so they would refuse to open my slot to give me food. I would tell them I wasn't refusing my meal but just refusing to put on my jumpsuit. Then I would file an emergency grievance for being denied food. I did this for the 3 meals on the 15th. On March 16th, 2007 I continued this form of food strike. Also, on the morning of the 16th I pushed a lot of paper out under the door and lit it on fire, in turn lighting my door on fire. On March 16th at 6:30 pm count I was sure to cover my window for count (and had my cell set up so I could fight correctional officers if they came to do a cell extraction.) A correctional officer opened my slot to look in for count, but could not see me due to a sheet hanging across the cell. I happened to have a 4 inch piece of sharpened metal in my hand, at which time I rushed around the sheet and tried to stab the correctional officer in the face, but he had

 heard me a second earlier and jumped back as my hand came out of the slot. The c/o ran to tell the senior, at which time I threw baby oil all over the tier outside my door – so when the cell extradition team arrived it would get on the bottom of their boots and I'd have a better chance at a fight. And yes, I had a weapon, but they also came with eight officers, chemical agents, tasers, taser shields – so you have to be cunning to outwit them for a good fight. Well, the cell extraction team came and with chemical agents (strong pressurized pepper spray) so I got to the back of the cell up on the bunk, hunched low, with a wet towel over my nose and mouth, and my shank in the other hand. So, they gave me commands to cuff and I didn't say anything so they sprayed an issue of chemical agents. After ten minutes they opened my slot again and commanded me to cuff up. I didn't say anything, so they sprayed more chemical agents into my cell. But they refused to come into my cell because I had a weapon, and they didn't want anything close to a fair fight. So they posted a CO outside my door on a bucket so my weapon can't get out of the cell, and alert the other COs not to open my slot. All night COs were coming on my intercom speaker talking shit to keep me awake, and after 6:00 am on March 17th, they started hitting my door to try to keep me awake. (March 17th 6:00 am I must say changed their minds and took away and vanquished the new rule). So everybody got breakfast except me and at this point I had not eaten for 2 1/2 days. But I still refused to give up my weapon because I wanted a fight. At about 10:00 am the corrections response team was conducting cell searches on every cell.

Well at this point I'd had it and took down the window covering and told the c/o's to come in, and they said they would not as long as I had a weapon, so I gave them the weapon and told them to come in. They requested me to take down the sheet covering half of my cell and uncover and turn on the light. So I did all of this, and they still refused to perform a cell extraction. The cowards didn't have the heart to come in on one unarmed man with any number of them and their gadgets. They needed to search my cell, but all they would do is keep spraying me with chemical agents and not come in. Well I figured our fight was won- due to them taking the rule away and I personally made them show and show all their cowardly ways in front of everyone. I stripped out, cuffed and went to shower to wash chemical agents from my body. I wanted to write about this because it involved many people to stand up on a

combined effort to let them know we wouldn't stand for something. 8
And it was a rarity because they actually changed something we wanted changed. I was just one of many in this fight.

Robert McGuire #83383
Ely State Prison
Box 1989
Ely, NV 89301

Ohio

The Conditions Factory *18 Sep 08*

The State of Ohio is broke. In early 2008, to meet a budget cut of $24 million, the Department of Corrections eliminated all sex-offender programming. Prisons are implementing bans on electricity during late-night hours. The DRC has eliminated state soap and, at some prisons, they do not provide prisoners in segregation with hygiene packages. Most prisoners, after court costs are collected, must use the $15 left in order to purchase ALL hygiene for a month (soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush, laundry soap) as well as paying $3 for each medical visit or dental visit (and still paying for aspirin, fungal cream, band-aids, vitamins, laxatives, etc.), and paying for legal copies and postage (as well as personal correspondence, pens, paper). Prisoners must choose between soap and hygiene on one hand, or medical and legal access on the other, simply because $15 doesn't cover it all.

When rights are out of your price range, they aren't rights; they are just happy lies that the plantation master tells you to keep you picking his cotton.

Further, prisons are cutting food portions. The listed portion sizes on cycle menus are often cut in half and many prisons limit prisoners to 2 cups of milk per day to save money. The Food Nazis deny these practices occur. Without cameras, recording equipment, or a method to take evidence from the chow-halls, the slow starvation of the prison population is a matter of plausible denial.

Further still, Quartermasters violate policy and deny clothing exchanges

 on the basis of having nothing to exchange—purposely keeping no clothing in stock. Clothing Nazis, like the one in Toledo, squander thousands of dollars on frivolous expenditures like hundreds of raincoats that get warehoused and never issued, and then have no funds for socks and T-shirts and underwear to provide for basic needs.

With more than 53,000 Ohio prisoners, DRC Director Terry J. Collins is packing a dangerous powder keg full of angry, hungry captives wearing rags, denied access to courts and justice, subjected to substandard medical care, sometimes forced into lifestyles of gambling or drug-pushing or prostitution, threatened with mind-numbing deprivations in the hole or even ride outs to supermax if they speak truth to power (it is now against the rules to say the system would collapse without prisoner save-labor, and Gestapo Chief Terry Collins himself has signed off on such unconstitutional and un-American silencing of free speech).

In order for prisoners to have the same spending power in state-pay as when it was established in the 1970s, the DRC would have to pay each prisoner $285 each month. So prisoners now make roughly 5% of what their pay would be if it had been raised along with inflation.

Prisoners must demand everything entitled to policy—clothing and food, medical and dental. If denied, or if you witness abuses, fraud, or misappropriation of funds, use these resources:

Ohio Justice and Policy Center 215 E. 9th St., Ste. 601/ Cincinnati, OH 45202 (Will file class-action lawsuits against the DRC)
Ohio State Medical Association 3401 Mill Run Dr./ Holland, OH 43026 (Report medical neglect)
Ohio Dental Assoc. 1370 Dublin Rd./ Columbus, OH 43215 (Report denial of dental care)
Ohio Inspector General 30 E. Broad St., Ste. 1820/ Columbus, OH 43215-3414 (Report waste, fraud, etc., or have someone call toll-free 1-800-685-1525)
Coordination and Review Civil Rights Division/ US Dept. of Justice/ PO Box 66560/ Washington, DC 20035-6560 (Don't really care about civil rights violations but monkeys in suits running prisons don't like getting calls from them, either)
Corrections Institution Inspection Committee Riffle Center, 8th Fl./ 77 S.

High St. Columbus, OH 43215 (Staff answering to senators and representatives, will at least act like they give a damn and can give prisoncrats lots of grief if they choose)

"Where the conditions for revolution are not present, they must be manufactured..."

--George L. Jackson

-Sean
The Conditions Factory
PO Box 602543
Cleveland, OH 44102

Pennsylvania

State Correctional Institution- Greene *September 2008*

I am honored to participate amongst the rest with sincere writings of my Control Unit and resistant struggle – concerning the Prison Industrial Complex as a whole infrastructure. Secondly, I've been transferred temporarily from SCI Greene to here at SCI Rockview because of my attempts to assist another comrade at his trial supporting the prisoners with his alleged assault on a guard three and a half years ago down here. In addition, I'm still being held in the Control Unit at Rockview. At least 10 of us have arrived here collectively from several separate prisons for the same reason, though as the testimonial process unraveled, not very surprisingly, 'our' soldiers began to dilute their valor and pledge to the protection of the struggle by either becoming 'mute' or simply and eminently dropping a verbal gun, solely designed for the 'have nots,' replacing it with an enemy combatant weapon, further joining oppressive ranks! Finally, the daunted glimpse from the oppositional guards caused the charged brother to proceed to accompany together three worthy, dedicated to the graveyard cadres; me and two other soldiers. As if that wasn't enough divide and conquer, the District Attorney deceitfully and timidly had discovered that 'I,' scheduled as the star witness against the state, couldn't have been housed at SCI Rockview 1/25/05—and if I was, I was definitely not in general population, where the said incident was supposed to have occurred—knowing that I've been compelled to spend five years straight in multiple segregated blocks within several different

 warehouses. So much for my theatrical preparations to a small jury. Nonetheless, 'Oatmeal is better than "no" meal!' i.e. the accused comrade ended up with two solid companions who both performed perfectly. Thence, they urgently rushed us back to Rockview 'armed to the teeth,' while we uselessly had all of the modern day restraints over 'our' hands, legs and waists. We never approached a chance to hear the outcomes of the trial. My ulterior motives were basically to inform the (aware and unaware) masses of the ruling class' diverse suppression upon the innocent.

Bro. Khalil Bennett DX-9353
175 Progress Drive.
Waynesburg, PA 15370

Texas

Mutual Aid Texas/Mad Tricycles Brigade *October 2008*

At approximately 7 pm on Monday October 20, 2008 Governor Rick Perry made public his order for a system wide lock-down of all prisons in the state of Texas. The lock-down was ordered after a prisoner on Texas death row (the most active death machine in the industrialized world) made a reportedly threatening cell phone call to a state representative.

The consequences for those of us within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have been quick and extreme. All movement has ceased. All work, school, rehab programs, recreation and family visits have come to a screeching halt. We are being subjected to excessive and humiliating searches. Our meager personal possessions are being broken or confiscated, our bed linen and clothes trampled under the boots of guards and returned unwashed. We are having to listen to listen as staff insults our families, as it is insinuated that they are the root of the problem.

It has been reported that multiple cell phones have been discovered on death row with upwards of 2,000 calls being made from those phones. There is no contact visitation for prisoners on death row. They have no physical contact with anyone who is not an employee of TDCJ. Like the

vast majority of all contraband, in the Texas prison system, cell phones are brought in by the guards and sold to prisoners who are desperate to maintain contact with the outside world. It is not prisoners or their families smuggling these things in, but the prison staff; and yet, it is the prisoners and their families who are easy targets for retribution and increasingly repressive measures.

If the prison administration and Governor Rick Perry are truly interested in stopping cell phones and other contraband from entering the prisons, they ought to begin by subjecting all of their employees to the same degree of scrutiny that our families suffer when they come to visit.

Out of an estimated 2,000 cell phone calls from death row, only one was threatening. It would stand to reason that the other 1,999 calls made were to the family and friends of men who sit behind tons of steel and concrete waiting to be executed. Who in a similar situation would not want to call a friend, a grandmother, a sibling or parent? Texas is the only state in the U.S. that does not provide telephone access for prisoners and their families. How much of this might be avoided if Texas prisons would step out of this violent, archaic plantation past and join the rest of the country in the 21st century?

As of October 22nd, two women, each with a loved one on death row, have been named publicly, arrested and charged with felonies for purchasing the phone and the minutes in attempt to maintain some form of human contact with their condemned family members. Meanwhile, we are left to wonder if anything has happened to the guards who actually brought the phones into the prison.

If the facts have changed by the time you read this, you will have to forgive me. I am one of over 150,000 people imprisoned in Texas, I have no access to phone or a computer, and since we are currently locked down, my access to outside information has virtually ceased.

Doc Stanford- Mutual Aid Texas, Mad Tricycles Brigade

13

Mutual Aid Texas *November 2008*

"Mutual Aid Texas is a collective comprised of prisoners who are united as prisoners. We identify as prisoners before and above any racial, geographical, or social-economic distinctions because we are a specific class of people who have shared circumstances and needs."

Mutual Aid Texas Provisional Charter

Mutual Aid Texas is a recently formed collective with it's origins in Texas prisons. Our collective was created by current and former prisoners as well as dedicated prison abolitionists in the so-called free world.

MAT was formed out of the desire to provide a basis for unity, radical education and collective action for prisoners. The prison system relies on racial and gang divisions to keep prisoners divided and weak and attempts to foster a sense of alienation and powerlessness to control the rapidly expanding prison population. MAT is an attempt to counter these and other devices exploited by the prison system that act as a hindrances to the growth of prisoner unity. We strive to play a part in building a radical, revolutionary consciousness among prisoners, our families, and friends, with the goal of building a movement that can ultimately overturn the prison industrial complex.

MAT is currently composed of anarchists and anarchist sympathizers, but we are not an anarchist exclusive collective. Our structure will remain horizontal, directly democratic and anti-authoritarian - key anarchist principals - but one need not identify as anarchist to be involved with MAT. Membership in MAT is open to all prisoners and their supporters. We are not a gang and do not open membership to gang members, but we do seek to provide gang members an avenue to leave their affiliations behind and embrace revolutionary struggle.

At present we are a small but growing collective. For most of us, organizing is new and uncharted waters and doing so on the inside presents unique challenges. We are learning by doing.

This brief report is a call to all prisoners and supporters of prisoners to get involved in the creation of Mutual Aid Texas.

Join us!
Mutual Aid Texas

For more information contact:
Inside Books Project
Attn: Mutual Aid Texas
c/o 12th Street Books
827 W. 12th St
Austin, TX 78701

INMATES for ENDING LOCKDOWN *October 8, 2008*

Dear Warden Strong;

We, the INMATES for ENDING LOCKDOWN (IFEL), want to present as a group our concerns and requests with hopes you will end this lockdown that you have so cruelly created. It's a basic right in this country to have the presumption of innocence; to not be punished for crimes we did not commit; and to not be falsely charged. You are violating these rights with this lockdown of medium custody.

The inmates who are assaultive have been taken to seg and are already being punished. You have no right to presume the rest of us are problems. The assaultive inmates have assault records and were, no doubt improperly classified. That is a failure of UCC and NOT our fault. UCC frequently fails to keep us safe.

You are blocking our mail and grievances. You block our mail by refusing to let us have our commissary run today so we can buy stamps, etc., AND by letting the guards TOUCH our mail (instead of the mail room) during breakfast pick up. Mail tampering & obstruction is a Federal crime. The Grievance people are still slipping in and out unannounced.

You are denying us access to medical care and violating our right to

15 medical confidentiality. When we have lay-ins, we are NOT being pulled for our passes. When we ARE pulled, the guards are coming into our appointments.

A.D 3. 31 says our meals must be "wholesome and nutritious": Sack lunches are neither, we get 4 pieces of bread (some white, which some people are allergic to) with peanut butter mixed with nasty syrup: NO NUTRITION. We get cold meat, which is dangerous, especially when staff like Ritter & Company let our food sit for 30 minutes before feeding us.

For the past 48 hours there hasn't even been fruit in our "Johnnies", when dried fruit is the only healthy thing that we've been getting daily. Dried fruit isn't as healthy as fresh fruit; and we're well aware that the unit (including the staff) has been eating fresh watermelon.

Also, in the unhealthy category is denying us our required daily outside and dayroom recreation.

Back to feeding: The staff is becoming more & more malicious in feeding (or not feeding us) by feeling empowered to treat us like dogs who must grovel on the floor for food. Three out of the four guards as us to get into a position that damages people's knees (and they ignore even the alternative position outlined in A.D. 3.31 for people with knee & other injuries: laying on your belly on the bed).

Having the staff come into our cells to feed us – instead of just feeding us at the door – also violates A.D. 3.83 (on avoiding staff injuries). So, it needs to be eliminated, period.

The staff is also becoming more and more lax about our hygiene needs – not including the above-mentioned fact that you won't let us go to store to also buy our hygiene stuff. Ritter & her card refused to shower us for 3 out of their 4 days on – leaving us un-bathed for 4 days. Staff was showering us every other day the first week of this lockdown. Also, the laundry has never has never sent us the clean uniforms they are required to send us 3 times a week by policy. They are shorting us every time they do send necessities. For example, they sent us 16 pairs of socks yesterday for 80 inmates.

You are also illegally blocking our access-to-the-court by blocking our regular, off-unit visitors from visitation plus blocking our mail, you are essentially blocking our access to the outside world. It's certainly convenient for you to block our access to the world if you intend to intensify torturing us – but it is illegal, warden.

Many of us have offered forth a peaceful protest of your tyrannical lockdown by hunger-striking today. We do so as a non-violent, peaceful reminder of our innocence in the face of your increasing violence against us.

We ask you to end this lockdown immediately, to restore our visitation immediately, and to let us go to store (so we can buy stamps, etc.) immediately.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

I.F.E.L. INMATES for ENDING LOCKDOWN
(By: Dr. Catherine ("La Gata") Marston,
TDCJ-CID#130127, lane Murray Unit,
1916 N. Hwy. 36 Bypass,
Gatesville, Texas 76596)

Who needs outside help A.S.A.P.!!!

Texas's War on Battered Women *November 2008*
By Dr. Cathy Marston

Domestic violence is one of the most pressing HUMAN RIGHTS issues facing Americans today. A recent study by the U.S. Dept. of Justice shows that 78% of all women are survivors/victims of domestic violence, and many of these women have children who will grow up to be young men and women. Ninety-nine percent of all batterers are male (this includes male-on-male violence). These facts are indisputable.

While you may be aware of the above, you may not be aware that on a domestic violence call in Texas, 20% of the time the TX police deliberately arrest the battered woman instead of her male batterer. This

 atrocity happens only 3% of the time in other states, according to the Texas Council on Family Violence. This Dark Age of Patriarchal Violence here in Texas happens amid & against a years-long movement to free & exonerate battered women in prisons in the REST of the U.$. (See, for example, the Fall 2007 Ms. Magazine article entitled, 'Freeing the Survivors' on p. 19. California initiated this movement to grant clemency to battered women in 2002 with the creation of a unique law to prompt their exoneration & release).

Back to Texas: in 2004, the Austin police found my abusive ex-boyfriend &/or his best friend ON TOP OF ME TRYING TO KILL ME on two separate occasions. These facts are undisputed, as is the FACT that on BOTH occasions, the cops called off these murderous brutes and arrested ME—then yukked it up with these thugs. Texas's ever-corrupt injustice system sent ME to prison as an innocent victim, with these two batterers NEVER HAVING BEEN CHARGED & empowered to beat more women.

In TDCJ, I have faced nonstop retaliation, harassment, & staff violence for my grievance-writing, lawsuit-filing, & doctoral education. Staff have had me locked down for 3 years to starve me, freeze me, broil me, assault me, sic inmates on me, block my mail, & block my access to the law library. This is typical of how TDCJ admin. has treated my foremothers in this struggle—namely, other battered women like the famous Sherry Nance.*

When I try to meet with the other battered women here in TDCJ & on my unit to draft a group writ, unit administration perpetually obstructs us. They've TRASHED 2 writs for TX battered women since May 2008 —after blocking ALL of my outgoing mail for 18 months from 3/06 to 9/07.

Texas has created a unique jurisprudence & practice that empowers men to batter women with the knowledge that the crooked cops & courts will provide the ultimate in misogynist victim-blaming: arresting the female victim, slandering her as the problem, & silencing her forever through the torture of Texas's notorious prisons & jails. This is a lose-lose situation for ALL citizens in Texas—& for ALL Americans.

Please support my application for a pardon by writing:
TDCJ Board of Pardons & Paroles
8617 Shoal Creek Blvd.
Austin, TX 78711

And please write incoming president Barack Obama & your favorite responsive public official to END violence against ALL humans & here in Texas. Also, please write:
Gov. Rick Perry
1400 Congress Ave
Austin, TX 78711

Thank you! Remember: the personal IS political!
FREE BATTERED TEXAS WOMEN!

Dr. Cathy Marston
1306127 LM
1916 N. Hwy 36 Bypass
Gatesville, TX 76596
(Can't accept mail from other inmates)

* Editor's note: Sherry Nance was convicted of the murder of her husband in the late 1980s. He had been raping their eight year old son. Nance is also being held at Gatesville in Texas.

Utah

Utah State Prison- Draper *December 2008*

The Utah State Prison is begging for litigation for First & Fourth Amendment Rights Violations, in its UINTA-1 Special Intensive Management Unit (SIMU), for Muslim diet refusals. Religious literature is not being allowed through the mail and obvious cruel & unusual punishment-type issues with mentally ill inmates being housed in these solitary cells. The denial of books and basic hygiene materials, combined with the fact that most all COs are just plain mean and emotionally desensitized from years of inflicting abuse, surely account for the unbelievably high rate of suicide attempts and actual suicide rates I witness day in and day out.

19 Those of us who speak up and out get extra shakedowns, refused writing materials and Grievance Forms; and our doors kicked during counts with taunting-type language.

SWAT Team extractions and beatings with pepper spray seeping into neighboring cells happen almost daily, and usually to the same poor mentally ill and confused inmates. One is actually almost totally deaf, so the direct orders he receives, fall literally on deaf ears.

Psychiatric medications are pushed on inmates like dope on the streets, mostly so everyone will just sleep through the abuse. I find myself scared to even shower because these CO's sometimes don't need an excuse to throw you down and rough you up.
When I do try and Grieve these issues, either I receive no responses or get excessive retaliation. I've been handcuffed to a hitching post for several hours and forced to urinate on myself, which I still to this day have shoulder pain from.

Just one voice in 2.3 million. Utah State Prison is soon to be served a wakeup call…

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International News

Half of Greek prison population to be released after hunger strike
From ((i))ndymedia

After 18 days 7,000 prisoners in Greece stop their hunger strike after the ministry of justice concedes to a series of their demands, promising to release half the country's prison population by April 2009.

On Thursday the 20th of November more than 7,000 hunger strikers in Greek prisons demanding a comprehensive 45-point program of prison

reform have decided to stop their hunger strike, already on its 18th day, after the Ministry of Justice responded to their struggle and to the widening solidarity movement which in the last weeks has held several mass protest marches in the Greek cities by declaring that by next April the number of prisoners in Greek jails will be reduced to 6.815 from the present 12.315, thus effectively releasing half of the country's prison population.

Thus in a press release, the Prisoners' Committee announced that:
"The amendment submitted to the Parliament by the Ministry of Justice tackles but a few of our demands. The minister ought to materialize his promises for the immediate release of the suggested number of prisoners announced, and at the same time implement concrete measures regarding the totality of our demands. We the prisoners treat this amendment as a first step, a result of our struggle and of the solidarity shown by society. Yet it fails to cover us, it fails to solve our problems. With our struggle, we have first of all fought for our dignity. And this dignity we can offer as a present to no minister, to no screw. We shall tolerate no arbitrary acts, no vengeful relocation, no terrorizing disciplinary act. We are standing and we shall stay standing. We demand form the Parliament to move towards a complete abolition of the limit of 4/5 of served sentence, the abolition of accumulated time for disciplinary penalties, and the expansion of beneficial arrangements regarding days off, and conditional releases for all categories of prisoners. Moreover, we demand the immediate legislation on the presently vague promises of the minister of justice regarding the improvement of prison conditions (abolition of juvenile prisons, foundation of therapeutic centers for drug dependents, implementation of social labor in exchange for prison sentence, upgrading of hospital care of prisoners, incorporation of European legislation favorable to the prisoners in the Greek law etc.). Finally, we offer our thanks to the solidarity movement, to every component, party, medium, and militant who stood by us with all and any means of his or her choice, and we declare that our struggle against these human refuse dumps and for the victory of all our demands continues".
Prisoners' Committee 20/11/08.

21 Buenos Aires, Argentina: Train tracks blocked for Freddy and Marcelo

Written by some anarchists Dec. 3, 2008

This past November 26, 2008 anarchist companions in solidarity with hunger striking prisoners, Freddy Fuentevilla and Marcelo Villaroel, blocked the tracks that join with Villa Rosa (Belgrano line) in the proximity of the Villa de Mayo station. The companions set a fire on the tracks at the same time as hanging a banner with the words "FREEDOM TO FREDDY AND MARCELO, NO TO THE EXTRADITION (A)" No to the extradition of Freddy and Marcello!!! Freedom to all the prisoners!!! For the destruction of all that makes us slaves!!!

Struggle of Italian Prisoners Serving Life Imprisonment

by Anarchist Black Cross Berlin, edited by EBPS
December 2008

"…What does it feel like to be condemned to life in prison?
Well, imagine that all your worse fears be brought together." (by an Italian life prisoner)

On the 1st of December 2008 several life prisoners chose to begin a public struggle from this date on, by using the mean of the hunger strike on relay: to say, that every week there will be a different region doing this strike, until mid-March 2009, where the strike will end. The mobilization will begin on the 1st of December, where all regions will make a day of hunger strike. Alfredo Sole, life prisoner in Livorno writes, "Not everybody knows what a life sentence really is. One is lead to think that it is simply another form of detention like many regimes. One is convinced that a person condemned to 'life' after a certainly long amount of time will finally be released. Maybe, once, this really was the case. But now, in a country where one security emergency is followed by another and that is followed by yet another, lifers have no hope of being set free. This is, in fact, a country where people are induced to fear crime because this fear, rising within the population, can help some politicians along in their careers. Crime is considered in fact a sort of 'illness that politicians promise regularly to 'cure'. Within this system people who have been condemned to life imprisonment will really never

be released!"

If you are sentenced to life in Italy (and you can get sentenced to several life sentences, one of the many aberrations of the penal code), this means you will not be able to access any beneficial measures: no day leave, no parole, nothing.

The prisoner's describe the fight in their words: "Against life sentence: because the hope towards coming free again is needed in order to not transform a punishment into a psychological and social death; the respect of the article 5 of the universal Declaration of Human rights dated 1948: nobody should be subjected to tortures, or to a cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; an inquiry Commission of the European Parliament about prisons in Europe." (from a letter signed by Spoleto's life prisoners to all Italian and European prisoners: you can find this complete letter, as well as others, in Entfesselt coming out by mid-November).

However, the Italian State and its judicial authorities couldn't be bothered, and life prisoners decided to stop after roughly two weeks, as soon as they have realized that there would not be any echo of their struggle reaching the ears of the ones in power.

Many prisoners believed that journalists, sympathetic politicians and democratic judicial authorities would have spent at least a word in their favor.

All in all it proved again what anarchists and other people who came at daggers drawn with this society say permanently: do not believe such vultures, believe rather all the ones who struggle on your side carrying no other interest than developing relations in struggle in order to overthrow the present system.

Active solidarity with the struggle of Italian and worldwide prisoners! Against life sentence, against a life inside a prison society!